The Queen’s Garden

Prologue re-write

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I grew up in a quiet suburb with a creek behind my house. I found so much joy in my thriving little town because it meant new neighbors and new friends. My brothers and I would play baseball in our cul-de-sac with the other neighborhood kids, predominantly white, mostly Christian. Our family must have been the only Jewish one on the block, so I felt special somehow.

I spent long hours at a dance studio, trying to look as tiny and weightless as I could jumping through the air. My ballerina friends and I would train in tutus and leotards with bows in our hair until the studio doors opened for us to the outside world. We would shed the little bows and frilly things that made us “dainty and perfect for the part”, and drive down back roads to play in the woods and in the river. That was an escape. The mud, the crunchy leaves, hair that wasn’t pulled into a tight bun; only to then come home, tutu’s in hand as if we lived every second of our lives in them.

Now I’ve grown up and out of every single leotard I used to adore. I know that my town is way over populated, and cringe at the sight of new houses being built. I know that my religion is not only special but also fading. My brothers and I don’t have time for the cul-de-sac.

The back roads are over grown and the rivers look much less inviting than they used to. But when were all home we still adventure down them and to the river, one after the other like little ballerinas. Nobody’s hair is pulled up in a bun and nobody is trying to be weightless.